

## Summary of Oral History: Mykola Kletsko

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Mykola Kletsko, born in 1932 in Uzhok, Velykobereznianskyi district, Zakarpattia region in a large family (7 children). He says that in 1939 there was Czechoslovak power in Zakarpattia region. In 1939 there were the Magyars (Hungarians), and in other Western Ukrainian regions there was Soviet power. A border was established along the Uzhok Pass. His elder brother did not want to join the Hungarian army, so in 1940 he crossed the border with "Russia", where he was convicted of violating the state border and sent to the Ukhto-Izhemsk labor camp. Later he was at war with the brigade of Ludwig Svoboda. He died in Kyiv battle, buried there.

Mykola's father served in the Hungarian army, and fought in the First World War.

In Uzhok, in addition to Ukrainians, there were several Slovak families, a German family (the wife died and the husband fled to Australia) and 6-7 Jewish families. The Jews were engaged in trade. They had a good relationship, they often helped out and lent money to local people. They spoke Hebrew, but they knew Ukrainian. They were religious. There was a synagogue in Uzhok.

Opposite the interviewer's family lived a large Jewish family, engaged in work with cattle and the meat trade. In 1943 they were taken away by the Germans, first two sons, then the elderly, and the third deportation included the daughters. They knew in advance that they would be taken away, but did not hide. The interviewee knows nothing about their future. Thus, all local Jews were taken away, the strongest were left. They were taken to make anti-tank obstacles on the Uzhok Pass, and other Jews were also brought there for this purpose. They were placed in empty homes of the Jews. These houses were also inhabited by Germans.

Three Jews were also placed in the interviewee's house. They were not guarded, but there was a mark on the house (an inverted triangle) and there was a hexagonal star on the houses of the Jews.

When the defensive line was built, the people were taken out. There were Germans and Hungarians in the village.

The interviewee remembers that Germans were different. When the Soviet army was advancing, the bridge near the village was bombed, so the family had to stay in the neighboring village of Husnyi for two weeks and leave the cattle, so one German fed their pigs.

He remembers that there was a Hungarian barrack in the village. There were strict border guards.

He did not hear anything about the UPA during the war. Later he found out that there was a Soviet border outpost, and soldiers went through the woods to catch the "Banderites".

There was strong Russian propaganda. Several young men, including two of his cousins, left their families and crossed the border with Russia.

When the Soviet troops came, people met them with joy, but later began to realize that something was wrong.

In 1954-57, the interviewee served for 3 years in the Soviet army near the Ussuri taiga. Afterwards he graduated from Uzhgorod University.